

# MARCH 2021



# NEWSLETTER

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## IT'S TRAIL CLEAN-UP TIME

It's time once again for our annual spring clean-up of the Allegan State Game Area. Due to the pandemic we found it necessary to postpone last year's event until later in the year but we are back on schedule this year and hoping for good weather. This year's event is being sponsored by Waterboy Water Hauling and ExtremeTerrain's Clean Trail Grant Program. We will meet in the morning to figure out a plan of attack and hit the trails to pick up trash. A dumpster will be spotted at the meeting site as will the lunch wagon. We will provide; gloves, trashbags, bottled water, a hot-dog lunch, and maps if you need one. Please plan on being there by 9:30 AM but we can still use you if you show up later. The meeting/lunch/dumpster site is located ½ mile north of the intersection of 46th Street and 118th Avenue. Please see our Facebook event or message Doug Wine for additional information. We hope to see you there!

## IN THE NEWS

Kerry has secured a grant from **Extreme Terrain's** Clean Trail Initiative Program to help cover the cost associated with this year's trail clean-up (see above).

Our annual "Big Brothers Big Sisters" event has created a lot of memories for countless children and has even drawn new members to the club as is the case with our newest member, Sarah. Although participation on the part of Big Brothers Big Sisters has faltered the club as a whole still strongly supports the effort. We were recently contacted by Earnest Spencer who, like Sarah, has fond memories of his time on the trail with club members. Earnest has asked if we would be interested in taking kids from his organization "**No Fences**" out on the trails this year much in the spirit of our past events with BB/BS. The idea was warmly received at our last meeting and we have reached back out to Spencer to put the details together. Please stay tuned for more information.

We have received several inquiries about a possible **recovery/safety training class** and our new Trailmaster is busy putting that together. Paul already has an instructor lined up and they are putting the finishing touches on a curriculum. He is also exploring the possibility of a first aid class if there is enough interest. We will post the details once a location and date have been decided.

Great Lakes 4-Wheel Drive Association (**GLFWD**) is looking for volunteers to fill a couple soon to be vacated seats. They also need **volunteers** to serve in many less demanding but no-less important volunteer roles. If you are interested in being part of the effort to keep our sport alive and helping maintain access to our public lands please consider stepping up. Even a minimal amount of time helps with this important cause.

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## RECENT EVENTS

Our first two runs of the year were our annual winter run to Allegan (Doug's birthday run), and February's run to Ewart. Both were well attended with the Ewart Run winning the deep snow contest. With very deep snow comes vehicle recovery, more vehicle recovery, and ultimately BIG carnage followed by extreme recovery. Those are the conditions that make for a fun event and good memories and Ewart rarely lets us down. Ewart also got us the year's first winners of the TURKEY and CABLE PULLER awards (thanks Tim and Paul for keeping things interesting).

A couple members made the trip to Windrock in early March. Our Trailmaster (Paul) started by breaking his tow rig 2 miles from basecamp. Day two was to be a trip to Rocky Top for lunch but that plan was interrupted when they ran across an elderly couple stranded on the trail with a rear tire missing from their side-by-side. In true Sundowners fashion recovery efforts were mounted and they were safely relocated to the bottom of the mountain. They spent the rest of their time exploring various trails such as Trail 16, Trail 35, Trail 15, and a side rip to see the train. Some mild carnage, flops, and other challenges made for a fun trip.

Since I'm late with the newsletter, our annual Chili Run is also past history. Former member Mike Hennig agreed to host this year's event in his pole barn so we would have a place to keep, and later enjoy, big pots of chili. Five (5) member rigs showed up along with two guests rigs. It was dry and dusty and we were in two-wheel drive for most of the day. One "optional" trail did live up to its reputation and ate two of the five rigs that attempted it. Tim of course showed everyone it could be done in two-wheel drive but later declined the invite to try it again after the ruts were wallowed out by the stuck and nearly stuck vehicles. That was probably a wise choice!

## UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS

As was mentioned earlier, its trail clean-up time. Please see the description above and our Facebook page for more information.

How about a run to Rocks and Valleys April 1st? See Paul Cochran or our facebook event for more information.

According to the calendar April looks to be a slow month although some members will likely attend the Jeep the Mac event on April 23rd. There are however a couple runs being considered with details soon to be announced.

## Recap of new business items

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- We are in need of a trail leader for our June run to Silver Lake Sand Dunes.
- Please update your address if you have moved. It's also a good idea to verify your email address and phone number at least annually.
- Our website, Sundowners4X4.org is once again functional. We will be updating and adding new features as time allows.
- Should we explore the idea of a Christmas toy drive sans the marines? Jason is checking with Menards to see if they would still host the event if we did that.
- Is there any interest in putting together a swap meet this year? We have an opportunity through one of our new members to utilize the Kalamazoo Rod and Gun Club's facility for that type of event. We are looking into the possibility of partnering with them at their October swap meet.
- Should we look at doing more charity events or maybe a Poker Run?
- We were recently contacted by the Toledo Ohio Convention & Visitors Bureau and the organizers of the **Toledo Jeep Fest** which is now in it's 80th year. The event includes; concerts, live music, an ALL-Jeep Parade, Park and Shine, 2 home games with the Toledo Mud Hens, and of course JEEPS! If any members are interested in going we can work with the visitors bureau to secure accommodations and a spot in the parade. Sounds like the makings of a good time!

## **CLUB MEETINGS:**

- Meetings are held at Travelers Cafe and Pub 5225 Portage Road, 49002 at 7:00 pm, the second Thursday of every month. Everyone is invited to meet up with the group at 5:30 for dinner prior to the meeting. MEETINGS WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE VIA ZOOM FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

**Our next meeting will commence at 7:00 PM April 8th 2021.**

## **WHEELING WEDNESDAY/MEET AND GREET SCHEDULE:**

Meet and Greets are typically held at 6:00 PM on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. If you are in the area during one of these events be sure to stop by and say hi. Meet and Greets are PUBLIC events. Guests and visitors are encouraged to attend!

This month's Meet and Greet will be held at **Fricano's in Alamo** located at 7454 Sixth Street, Kalamazoo 49009. If the weather cooperates we will be meeting on the patio.

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**2020/2021 TENTATIVE CLUB CALENDAR - BOLD = CONFIRMED DATE**

<http://sundowners4x4.org/calendar/>

PLEASE NOTE; all events are private or, by invitation only, unless specifically listed as public.

- **April 10th Allegan State Game Area Trail Clean-up PUBLIC INVITED**
- **April 23rd - 25th Jeep the Mac 2021 NON-CLUB PUBLIC EVENT**
- April 21st - 25th Grayling Run
- **May 1st - Rocks and Valleys Off-Road Park**
- **May 2nd - 20th annual Jeep Blessing in Mesick - PUBLIC EVENT**
- May 8th or 14th weekend "overlanding" run with Adam???
- **May 27-31 Memorial Day Run at Bundy Hill (13 campsites are reserved)**
- **June 4th - 6th Silver Lake Sand Dunes Jeep Invasion - PUBLIC EVENT**
- June ??? Club Run to Silver Lake PUBLIC INVITED. Coordinate with Jeep Invasion?
- June 26th White Cloud Run
- **July 10th Butler Speedway fireworks spectacular - PUBLIC INVITED**
- **July 19th + 20th Heroes On The Dunes, Silver Lake**
- July 27th Christmas in July???
- August ???back to Silver Lake PUBLIC INVITED
- **August 6th, 7th and 8th - 80th annual Toledo Jeep Fest.**
- **September 2nd - 6th Annual Labor Day Weekend at Bundy Hill PUBLIC INVITED**
- **September 15th - 19th Gaylord/Vanderbilt Trail Ride (Elk Sighting)**
- October?? Jeep swap meet at the Rod and Gun Club?
- **October 13th - 17th Drummond Island**
- **October 23rd Fall Color Tour and Night Run**
- December Toys For Tots/Jay "Slim" Stull Memorial
- Keep an eye on the Facebook pages (public and private) for "spur of the moment" runs.

**ALL trips are on the club Google calendar and will soon be updated.**

**AWARDS:**

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Each month one “lucky” member is awarded a prize for some special feat of humanity or stupidity. This month’s winners include:

**CABLE PULLER AWARD:** Paul Cochran.

**TURKEY AWARD:** Tim Lamphere.

### **INFORMATION CENTER:**

- Club members, please send David or Kerry photos and stats of your rig to put on the public web site. No personal information will be shown.
- Contact a board member if you would like some “Spotted Your Rig” cards.
- For CB’s, CB tuning, and CB accessories we have found none better than the 131 CB Shop on 76th Street just south of Grand Rapids.
- O’Reilly Auto Parts on Gull Road offers steep discounts to all Sundowners members.

### **MEMBER CELEBRATIONS**

#### **Birthdays:**

March 18th Karen Martin

March 27th Linda Shouldice

March 30th Jon Martin

March 31st Bob Bowman

April 2nd Mark Turner

April 5th Michael Benson

April 7th Roger Miller

April 11th Rick Bagley

April 16th Russ Heath

April 22nd Lance Kolhoff

April 27th Adam Carr

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The Sundowners 4x4 Club meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

For more information, contact Tim @ 5178190057

WEBSITE: [www.sundowners4x4.org](http://www.sundowners4x4.org)

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